

My (Ryan) article, titled **Promoting Reading Comprehension in Social Studies** was a straight forward article that presented six different strategies to help social studies teachers promote better reading in their classrooms. There were two strategies each for pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading. They talked about the benefits of using the scaffolding reading experience (SRE) as the main tool to help literacy in social studies content. By using before, during, and after reading activities teachers can show students reading is an active and engaging task and it also helps remind teachers that comprehension takes place at multiple points in the process and reading comprehension is not merely an assessment.

The goal for these strategies is to create reader independence in social studies by promoting knowledge and use of text structures, the creation of summaries and charts, generating questions, and comparing and using information between various texts. These strategies also incorporate the use of teacher modeling, peer group work, and individual work. Overall, the article was not ground breaking or mind blowing but it did present an effective argument for the use of the various strategies and the need to emphasize social studies literacy specifically. A few of the strategies we have seen before and among the new ones presented a few were mediocre and a few were ones I would want to use. In particular, both of the during reading strategies and the ABC graffiti stuck out to me as effective. Here are a brief description of each of the strategies.

Pre-Reading Strategies: Explanation and Implementation

1. Establishing the Purpose for reading

1. Choose a short text section, single primary source, or short fictional piece to read
2. Give students a small number of "everybody reads to" for example
3. Helps model the purpose for reading that particular text
4. Directs readers away from narrow, fact based questions and towards global, big ideas in the reading
5. Also: after practice, students can write their own after being given objectives for unit (note: this can be an assessment tool)

2. Making Connections to Background Knowledge

1. List, group, label method: helps teachers facilitate prior learning, improve existing vocabulary, learn new vocabulary, and organize verbal concepts
2. List: A topic included in the reading is listed on the board, students or groups of students brainstorm words or phrases related to the topic
3. Group: the written lists are read by the teacher and correct pronunciation and meanings are given; the teacher then asks the students to organize the list into several related groups
4. Label: the teacher asks the students to give a label to each of these groups justify their labels
5. Can help strong readers access prior knowledge and can help struggling readers fill in the gaps and make connections to their background knowledge
6. First time this should be modeled by teacher and with explicit instructions; gradually it can be made less formal as students become accustomed

During Reading Strategies: Explanation and Implementation

1. Understanding the arrangements of text

1. Students must be able to: recognize the type of text, understand the structure of the text, and be able to synthesize between sequence, geography, cause and effect, compare and contrast, and other important parts of social studies reading
2. First teach external structures such as index, table of contents, bold vocabulary words, etc. Next, internal structures need to be taught
3. The use of graphic organizers, such as the flow chart above can be used to help students organize the information in the text
 - a. Students should look for key words in the internal structure such as: because, since, this led to, as a result that could help them decide what kind of text this is
 - b. Importance should be placed on the relationship between events or people and the main ideas of the text
 - c. The flow chart can be organized with cause (boxes) and effect (rectangles) and organized in chronological order to help students visualize the timeline
4. Other organizers such as K-W-L can be used as well

Build Your Own Organizer: 5 Steps for students to take

Students can be given the skeleton of an existing organizer where they fill in the blanks, a partially filled organizer, or the following:

1. Skim the passage and decide what type of text organizer the author used (may be more than one)
2. Students write down a predicted outline of the text
3. Students read the passage of the text
4. Students make revisions to their graphic organizer
5. Students use them to make a written summary

1. Making Connections between the text

1. Use of Inquiry charts (I-charts: see next page) to help organize info between two or more texts. Can be used if student is reading one or all of the texts.
2. Several questions are asked by teacher and the student looks for information about that question in both texts – sets a purpose and can help guide the reading
3. Students and teacher can compare the answers for questions and go over why they are similar/different and what that says about each text

Post-Reading Strategies: Explanation and Implementation

1. Monitoring comprehension through questioning

1. Use of reciprocal questioning (RQ) to not just get info recall but to test reading comprehension
2. Order of operations
 - a. Teachers read the text themselves and prepare a number of higher level questions for the students
 - b. Students prepare questions from the text after their reading
 - c. Teacher answers the questions from the text
 - d. Teacher poses the higher level questions as examples of critical thinking questions

1. Synthesizing information across texts

1. ABC graffiti and brainstorming (see next page for example) are used to help students organize and understand social studies
2. Step by Step breakdown
 - a. Students read a variety of texts (including text, primary, fictional) and complete an ABC graffiti sheet. They need to brainstorm key concepts of the text that begin with each alphabetic letter. They should not be allowed to look at the texts during this time. Give them 3 minutes.
 - b. Group students into groups of 4 or 5 and have them work together to complete an ABC graffiti sheet. Give them 5 minutes.
 - c. Collect the sheets and distribute them to the other groups so each group has another groups paper and repeat the process for 5 minutes.
 - d. Repeat this process a third time but this time allow the groups to use their texts to brainstorm and give them 10 minutes to work on it.
 - e. Once again collect the sheets and give them to a fourth group. This time the groups will take the concepts and synthesize them to create a summary paragraph that incorporates all of the concepts. Give them 15 minutes.
 - f. Hand back the sheets to their original group. Give them 10 minutes to write a thesis statement for the paragraph that summarizes all of the information.
 - g. Discussion: all of the groups share their summary paragraph and thesis. Afterwards a discussion on the key points of the paragraphs can be done.
3. writing prompt: using their thesis as the prompt the students can be given a writing assignment on the reading.